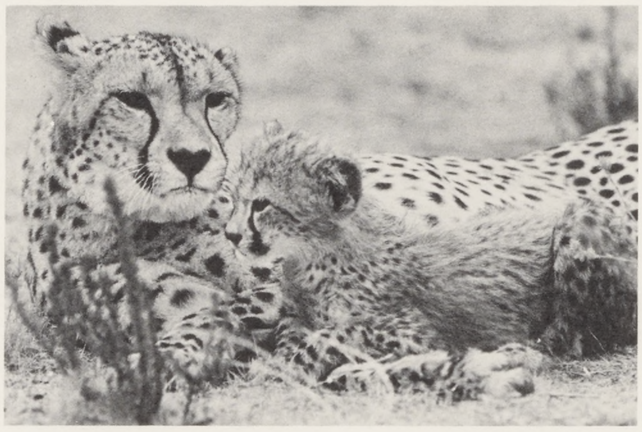
CRES REPORT

The Center For
Reproduction of
Endangered Species

Volume 2, Number 3—1984



Nyrie and her cub

LION-TAILED MACAQUES THRIVING AT THE ZOO

If you can judge lion-tailed macaques by their covers, the 15 monkeys that arrived from Monaco last October are thriving at the San Diego Zoo.

With fewer than 800 lion-tails estimated to remain in the wild, the world's hope for the future of the species rests to a large degree on the creation of a healthy, self-sustaining colony at our Zoo. The Center for Reproduction of Endangered Species' acquisition and care of the new animals are key steps forward in expanding the captive gene pool in the United States.

Silky coats and silver manes

When the macaques first arrived here, they were placed in quarantine and then moved to an off-exhibit area next to our original lion-tail colony at the Zoo. Led by Dr. Donald Lindburg, an authority on the macaque, CRES researchers observed several striking differences between the appearance of the new and old groups of animals.

The most obvious difference was between the length and fullness of the animals' manes which frame their faces. While the animals in the Zoo's existing colony sported beautiful, thick manes, the Monaco monkeys came to us with short, straggly manes.

A few months after the new macaques became adjusted to their home at the Zoo, their appearance began to change noticeably. Their black coats became longer, thicker and silkier, and their manes began filling out. In some of the animals, the change has been so dramatically complete that it now is impossible to identify them with the pictures taken of them just after their arrival.

Investigation of cause

When the new and old groups of animals first were compared, the CRES researchers were not certain of the reasons for the marked difference in appearance. However, they at first suspected that the cause was a genetic factor.

Further investigation now suggests that a change in diet may be the primary factor responsible for the Monaco macaques' improvement. A comparison of their diet at the CRES facility with their previous one shows that they now are receiving a higher level of certain nutrients, including protein.

Hope for self-sustaining colony

Two babies have been born in the new colony since its arrival. The births bring the total number of animals in the Society's collection to 33, making it the largest in captivity.

Making friends

The two groups of animals, close together but still physically separated, are in the process of getting to know one another. Our plan is eventually to exhibit the animals together in one large group so that they can develop their own social structure.

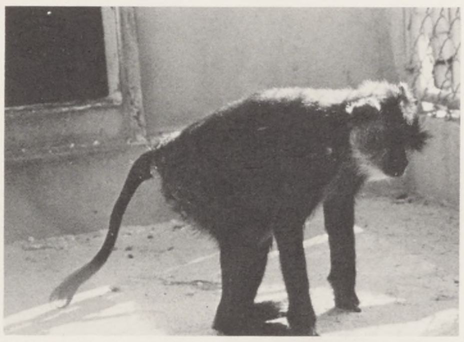


Photo: Helena Fitch

Celie before

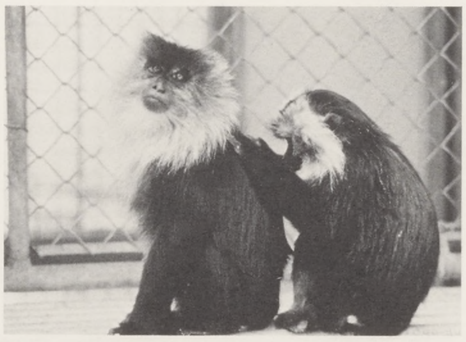


Photo: Helena Fitch

Celie after

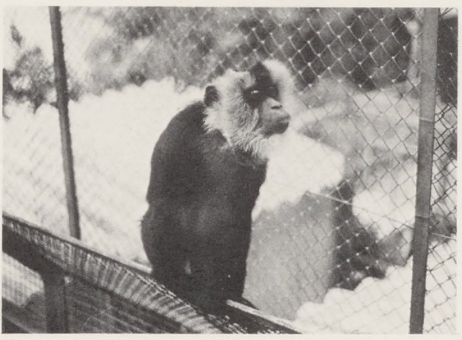


Photo: Helena Fitch

Pepe before

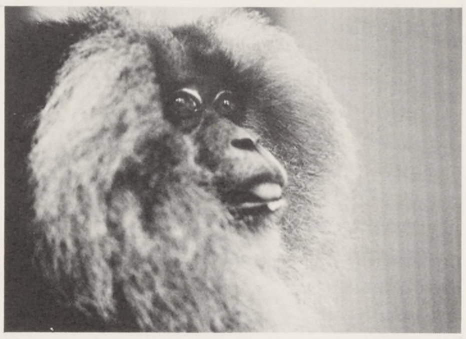


Photo: Richard Tenaza

Pepe after

Before and after—Two of the older animals from the Monaco group, Pepe and Celie, came to us with distinctive characteristics that have enabled us to continue to identify them despite the dramatic changes in their appearance. CRES researchers believe a change in diet may have effected the improvement in the monkeys' coats and silver manes.

CRES Report
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Dr. Kurt Benirschke

Honoring Kurt Benirschke
Director of Research, San Diego Zoo
Professor of Pathology and Reproductive Medicine,
University of California
School of Medicine, San Diego

In celebration of Dr. Kurt Benirschke's 60th birthday CRES researchers have authored and presented him with a *Festschrift.* This collection of papers is entitled *One Medicine,* in reference to Dr. Benirschke's extraordinary contributions to bridging two disciplines, human and veterinary medicine.

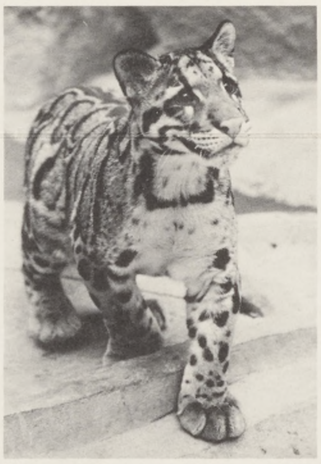
One Medicine, a 373-page volume, is available for purchase by sending your check for $36, payable to the Zoological Society of San Diego, to Mary Byrd, Zoological Society of San Diego, P.O. Box 551, San Diego, California, 92112.

Update: Nyrie the cheetah has twins

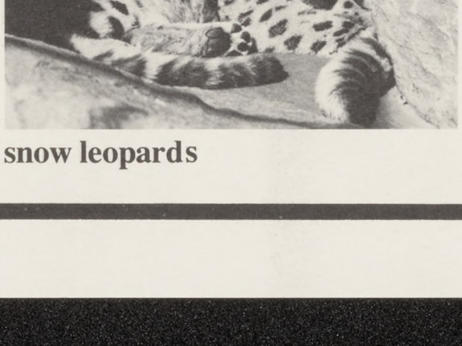
Nyrie, infertile since 1982, became pregnant after a small pump was implanted in her shoulder to release a special hormone into her system. (The novel strategy to stimulate ovulation in exotic animals was described in the last issue of *CRES Report*.)

On June 29, Nyrie gave birth to two healthy cubs, a male and a female. Because she hadn't cared for her first two litters, Don Lindburg built her a special nesting box equipped with a television monitor, enabling her to be watched undisturbed. Nyrie has been a model mother, devoting most of her time to caring for her cubs.

In the last issue of *CRES Report,* a photograph of a snow leopard was incorrectly labeled as a clouded leopard. We correct the error here.



clouded leopard



snow leopards